

EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION

(Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I am honored and delighted to be here this afternoon. Some of you, some of my colleagues, know what I have gone through over the last 4 or 5 months, and especially over the last 2 weeks, to get here and to make this reality. I appreciate Speaker GINGRICH working with my office and with me to make this reality. I am delighted to be here.

Mr. Speaker, I do not have a whole lot to say. I have said a lot to this point and I have been reading a lot and have been studying a lot, and I am looking forward to getting on with the business of this great country and the business of the Fourth District of Oklahoma.

So thank you very much for your patience, for allowing to make this swearing in, which is belated, and for allowing me to make this event a reality today.

With that I will close, and again say thank you very much.

INCLUDE UNFUNDED MANDATE LANGUAGE IN BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Ms. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, as the immediate past president of the National Conference of State Legislatures, I am very concerned that our move toward a balanced Federal budget could result in more unfunded mandates for the States, if Congress decides not to reduce program services to match reduced expenditures.

Any reductions in the Federal share of funding for mandated programs would seriously increase the fiscal burdens on the States.

I agree with the National Conference of State Legislatures that the Federal Government should not attempt to accomplish national goals through unfunded mandates on State and local governments.

The NCSL has proposed amendment language to the pending balanced budget measure now before the Judiciary Committee which states that:

Except as necessary to enforce obligations to individuals under amendments to this Constitution, Congress shall not impose any obligations upon the States without providing the funds necessary for compliance; nor shall Congress impose any conditions upon spending grants to the States unless such conditions are necessary to specify the manner in which the funds are expended.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to include this language in the balanced budget amendment.

GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

(Mr. GOSS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, the wave of reform is moving through this House. On opening day we made good on our pledge to start changing the way we conduct the Nation's business. Now we are getting down to the business of change to shrink the Federal Government and restore fiscal sanity. The streamlined committees of this House are already hard at work on a balanced budget amendment, a true line-item veto for the President, and a mechanism to stop unfunded mandates from crippling our State and local governments. We have pledged to cut spending and realign our Federal priorities—and we are going to fulfill that commitment. We will not be distracted by the diversionary or dilatory tactics of yesterday's powerbrokers—things have changed around here and Americans can once again trust their elected Representatives to do what we have said we will do.

THE PROPOSED BALANCED BUDGET CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

(Mr. TUCKER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TUCKER. Mr. Speaker, Ross Perot was right when he said "The devil is in the details."

My constituents have indicated to me that they do not support a balanced budget amendment and that the Republican majority is moving too fast on this issue.

In a shocking statement the new majority leader said on "Meet the Press":

Once Members of Congress know exactly, chapter and verse, the pain the Government must live with in order to get a balanced government, their knees will buckle.

Well, let us be honest about the cuts, the American public demands that we are.

The Republican majority needs to listen to the public on this issue. They don't want a constitutional amendment forcing a balanced budget.

If the Republicans expect the American people to agree to their program, they had better spell out the plan. The people want to know the details, and how the Republican plan will impact them.

WEEK TWO—THE BALANCED BUDGET

(Mr. BARR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, last week was a great and important beginning to a new way of doing the people's business in Washington. In a record-breaking first day of the session, we demonstrated that unlike the politicians who merely talk the talk, we

walk the walk. We have put the brakes on the tax raisers, cut committees and staff, and taken the steps necessary to bring this House under the same laws that govern the conduct of the citizens who sent us here. For the first time in decades, this House is being brought into order.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we must set to work immediately to bring the Government's fiscal house in order. Our Nation suffers under a multitrillion-dollar debt. Each and every dollar of that debt had its source in this House, which under the Constitution is the only body authorized to initiate spending bills. The interest to finance this public debt approaches \$250 billion each year, which is enough to fund the entire current defense budget of the country.

This fiscal irresponsibility is about to stop, Mr. Speaker. The balanced budget amendment, which is a critical provision of the Contract With America, will be taken up by this body shortly. There is not a moment to lose in doing all we can to assure its swift consideration and passage. Our future, and, more important, the future of our children and grandchildren, depend upon our ability to deliver on this promise to America.

GOPAC SHOULD OPEN ITS BOOKS

(Mr. BONIOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, this morning we saw one more example of why GOPAC needs to come clean.

This morning, the New York Times ran an interview with the Republicans' newly appointed House historian. This is a person who has served as an adviser to Republicans.

Yet when asked about GOPAC, not only did she say that GOPAC was founded, and I quote, as "a way of getting around campaign finance disclosure laws," she also called for abolishing most disclosure laws that are on the books today.

Is this the best the Republicans can do: to appoint a historian who champions secrecy? Who thinks Congress should roll back campaign finance laws?

Mr. Speaker, GOPAC is an organization that has raised up to \$20 million the past 9 years, and played a role in over 100 Republican campaigns.

Yet we don't know where this money came from, or who contributed because they refuse to reveal the names of past donors.

I would suggest if these charges aren't true, and if GOPAC has nothing to hide, it should come clean, where the \$20 million came from.

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BEGGING THE QUESTION

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House